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23.66.338 - Signs

A. The intent of the standards in this Section 23.66.338 is:

1. To encourage signs that by their design, location, and number are consistent with the goals and objectives of the International Special Review District, and the Union Station Corridor where applicable, and in particular the Asian character of the area;
2. To promote effective communication of sign messages by avoiding undue proliferation;
3. To enhance views and sightlines into and down streets; and
4. To reduce driver distraction and visual blight.

B. Business establishments may erect signs, including banners and flags that are signs, if the Director of Neighborhoods determines the proposed sign meets the standards in this Section 23.66.338 and issues a certificate of approval, except as provided in subsection 23.66.338.H.

C. Message.

1. Except as otherwise provided in this Section 23.66.338, signs are limited to:
 - a. Business signs that identify the name of the establishment, its street address, and/or the primary business or service provided or signs with a noncommercial message; and/or
 - b. Business signs displaying a product name, if (a) the sign is incidental to other signs on the premises and (b) the establishment or use on the premises is the sole distributor of the product in the District.
2. Except as provided in subsection 23.66.338.C.1, advertising related to businesses or services not provided on the premises or products not manufactured on the site is prohibited.

D. Permitted Signs.

1. The types of signs that may be approved are banners and flags, projecting and non-projecting signs integrated into the building façade, marquee, awning and window signs.
2. Banners and flags bearing emblems, symbols or messages are permitted and are subject to periodic review to ensure that their appearance is maintained and that they comply with the requirements of this Code.
3. Signs with messages displaying only time or temperature, or both, are allowed to change display if, in addition to complying with the standards set out in this Section 23.66.338, the message does not flash, display a message for less than ten seconds at a time, or use a video display method.

E. Prohibited Signs.

1. The following signs are prohibited throughout the International Special Review District:

Freestanding signs (except signs in parks and those authorized for surface parking lots in subsection 23.66.338.F.1);

roof signs;

portable signs;

off-premises signs;

product advertising signs of a permanent nature except as allowed in subsection 23.66.338.C;

flashing signs;

changing-image signs (including video display methods) except as allowed in subsection 23.66.338.D;
and

signs with messages that appear to be in motion or that make a noise.

2. The Board and the Director of Neighborhoods may delegate to the Director the determination whether a proposed sign is a sign prohibited under subsection 23.66.338.E.1. If the Director determines a proposed sign is a sign prohibited under subsection 23.66.338.E.1, the Director of Neighborhoods shall not send the application to the Board and shall deny the application.
3. Each owner of an existing off-premises sign that is lawfully authorized in the District shall comply with the requirements in subsection 23.55.014.F to register the sign, pay the registration fee, and display the sign registration number, and is subject to the penalty provisions of that subsection 23.55.014.F.

F. Surface Parking Lot Signage.

1. The total signage area permitted for each accessory surface parking lot shall not exceed 1 square foot per parking space up to a maximum of 24 square feet per surface parking lot. The total signage area permitted for each existing principal use surface parking lot shall not exceed ½ square foot per parking space in the lot, up to a maximum of 18 square feet per principal use surface parking lot.
2. Surface parking lots shall display a sign, counted against the total permitted signage area, with one of the following messages, if applicable:
 - a. For accessory surface parking lots, or portions thereof, intended only for customer use: "Customer Parking for (Principal User/s) Only." The sign also may contain the address of the principal user or users and mention validation of parking if applicable. The sign also may contain the information required by state law to lawfully impound unauthorized vehicles.
 - b. For accessory or principal use surface parking lots, or portions thereof, intended only for reserved parking: "Reserved Parking". The sign also may contain the name and telephone number of the owner. The sign also may contain the information required by state law to lawfully impound unauthorized vehicles.
3. Small on-premises directional signs, such as those designating the entrance to or exit from accessory surface parking areas, are permitted if they are 3 or fewer square feet in area and are located at a height 4 or fewer feet above grade at points of egress or ingress. Such signs shall not count against the total permitted sign area.

G. Illumination.

1. Neon-lit signs are encouraged to create an exciting and enhanced visual image in the retail core.
2. Illuminated signs shall be designed and sited in a manner to minimize glare on floors above grade in nearby residences.

H. Miscellaneous Signs.

1. Signs that are hand painted, gold leafed or decaled onto the glass area of a building façade and that comply with the standards of this Section 23.66.338 are permitted without the approval of the Director of Neighborhoods or review by the Board if the total area of all such signs does not exceed 4 square feet per business. Signs on glass in excess of 4 square feet per business are subject to review by the Board and approval by the Director of Neighborhoods for visual interest and compatibility with the surrounding area.
2. Non-illuminated signs consisting of Asian language symbols painted on wood or other non-glass exterior surfaces of structures and that comply with the standards of this Section 23.66.338 are permitted without the approval of the Director of Neighborhoods or review by the Board if the total area of all such signs is 4 square feet or less per business, and are subject to Board review and approval by the Director of Neighborhoods for visual interest and compatibility with the surrounding area if the total area of all such signs is more than 4 square feet per business.
3. Graphics and paintings are permitted on building walls that do not abut a street lot line only if such graphics and paintings are not used to advertise or identify businesses or products and comply

with the building façade provisions of Section 23.66.336. All graphics and paintings on building walls are subject to review by the Board and approval by the Director of Neighborhoods.

4. Temporary Signs.

a. The following signs are permitted at all times:

- 1) Real estate "for sale," "for rent" and "open house" signs, and signs identifying the architect, engineer or contractor for work currently under construction. The total area for these types of signs in the aggregate shall not exceed 24 square feet per 60 linear feet of street frontage, provided that the design, location, shape, size, color and graphics are approved by the Director of Neighborhoods after review and recommendation by the Board, and provided further that such Director may approve up to 36 square feet if there is more than one user of real estate signs or if the building abuts more than two streets; and
- 2) Noncommercial signs. The total area for noncommercial signs in the aggregate shall not exceed 24 square feet per 60 linear feet of street frontage, but where there are multiple users of the building, each business establishment and dwelling unit shall be allowed a minimum of 8 square feet of signage, regardless of the 24 square foot limitation.

b. The following signs are permitted for 14 consecutive days 4 times a calendar year:

- 1) On-premises commercial signs. The total area for on-premises commercial signs in the aggregate shall not exceed 24 square feet per 60 linear feet of street frontage, provided that the design, location, shape, size, color and graphics are approved by the Director of Neighborhoods after review and recommendation by the Board; and
- 2) Noncommercial signs. The total area for noncommercial signs in the aggregate shall not exceed 32 square feet per 60 linear feet of street frontage, provided that each dwelling unit shall be allowed 32 square feet of signage.

c. All temporary signs authorized by this section are subject to the following:

- 1) Wind-animated objects other than flags, search lights and devices of a carnival nature are not allowed.
- 2) No individual sign shall exceed 12 square feet.

d. Temporary signs required by law shall be permitted without review or approval.

I. Criteria for Approval.

1. When reviewing proposed signs, the Board and the Director of Neighborhoods shall consider the intents set out in subsection 23.66.338.A, the function of the sign, the character, color and scale of buildings in the immediate vicinity, the character, color and scale of the building for which the sign is proposed, the proposed location of the sign on the building's exterior, and the total number and size of signs proposed or existing on the building.
2. The overall design of a sign including size, shape, texture, method of attachment, graphics, color and lighting, shall be compatible with the use to which the sign refers, with the colors, architectural and design motifs of the building upon which it is to be installed, and with the District.
3. Signs that incorporate recognizable Asian designs or Asian language symbols in at least 40 percent of their message area, or are multilingual, are preferred.
4. Signs shall be affixed to structures so that they do not conceal, damage, or disfigure desirable architectural features or details of the structure.
5. Projecting signs shall be sited in a manner that minimizes view blockage of abutting business signs.

6. All projecting signs shall be installed or erected so that there are no visible angle iron sign supports above the roof, building face or wall.

J. Measurement of Sign Area. Sign area is calculated according to subsection 23.86.004.A.

(Ord. [125272](#), § 55, 2017; Ord. 123589, § 93, 2011; Ord. 120466 § 8, 2001; Ord. 117555 § 5, 1995; Ord. 116744 § 52, 1993; Ord. 112519 § 44, 1985; Ord. 112134 § 1(part), 1985.)